

In 1960, 10 percent of the population was age four and under; by 1970, this had dropped to 4.4 reflecting both a lower birthrate (a nationwide trend) and the annexation of the late 1960s which brought in families with older children. The implications for educational facilities are for fewer classrooms with the possibility that existing programs (or buildings) could be enhanced (modernized) since larger facilities are not needed.

A disturbing fact is that in 1960 with 22.7 percent of the population aged 5 to 14, a decade later, these people were in the 15 to 24 age bracket but their percentage had dropped to 17.6. This reflects the outward migration of many of these young people as they sought job opportunities elsewhere. Selma in this instance follows the general pattern of Johnston County.⁵ It seems clearly evident that this trend must be reversed to enhance the rate of economic growth of Selma.

Another interesting observation is to note what has happened to young productive workers over the years. In 1960, 11.4% of the people in town were aged twenty-five through thirty-four. A decade later, this same group would be in the thirty-five through forty-four aged category but their percentage had now dropped to 10.2. Considering that the town's population had grown by 40.4 percent (from 3102 to 4356), the people in this age category had grown by only 26.6 percent, indicating a continuation of outward migration of young, productive workers for better economic opportunities.

The growth of the sixty-five (65) and older segment is reflective of a national pattern as improved health care lengthens the span of life. Facilities and provisions to enhance the lives of these "senior citizens" should be kept in mind as plans for the future develop.

Population Projections

Most population projection methods assume to a certain extent that what has happened in the past will occur again in the future. All of the following methods were discussed with the Selma Planning Board, and after some deliberation, a decision was reached to shape the future land requirements to a higher population figure--using the OBERS series E disaggregation for Selma as a low figure. The envisioned population, by decade, to the year 2000 follows:

TABLE 4
POPULATION PROJECTIONS
1980-2000

| | 1970 | 1980 | % Change | 1990 | % Change | 2000 | % Change |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------|-------------|------|-------------|
| Selma | 4356 | 5200 | 19.4 | 6395 | 23.0 | 7500 | 17.3 |
| Extraterritorial | 324 ¹ | 931 ² | 18.7 | 1128 | 21.2 | 1269 | 12.5 |
| | (est) | | | | | | |
| Planning Area | 4680 | 6131 | 31.0 | 7523 | 22.7 | 8769 | 16.6 |